

# STATEWIDE SPECIAL EDUCATION CONFERENCE

Topic :

The State of the State :  
Across the Continuum  
of Services -  
Students, Staff and  
Families

📅 June 6, 2024

🕒 Check-in, Continental Breakfast 7:45  
PROGRAM 9:00 AM - 2:00 PM  
Light lunch will be served

📍 GPS:  
Hogan Center at Holy Cross  
(1 College St. Worcester)

*Hogan Center Parking Lot: Park in any available spot.*



KEYNOTE

**Jessica Minihan,  
Ph.D., BCBA**

Special Educator, Author,  
Behavior Analyst



SPECIAL GUEST

**Russell Johnston,  
Ph.D.**

Acting Commissioner of  
Education



SPEAKER

**Maria Mossaides**

Massachusetts Child  
Advocate



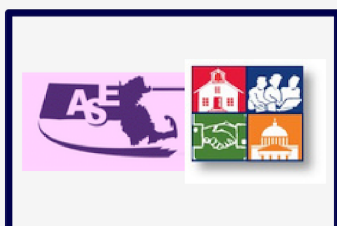
SPEAKER

**The Honorable  
Senator  
Sal DiDomenico  
Senator**



SPEAKER

**Paige Tobin, Esq.  
Murphy, Lamere  
and Murphy, PC**



**ASE CONFERENCE**

MA Administrators for Special Education



KEYNOTE

**Jessica Minihan,  
Ph.D., BCBA**

## **From the Clinical and Behavioral Lens**

### **The State of the State: Best Practices for Students with Mental Health and Emotional Challenges**

Jessica Minihan, Ph.D., BCBA, LABA, is a licensed and board-certified behavior analyst, author, special educator, and consultant to schools internationally. Since 2000 she has worked with students who struggle with mental health issues and challenging behavior in public school systems. She specializes in training staff and creating behavior intervention plans for students who demonstrate explosive and unsafe behavior. She also works with students with emotional and behavioral disabilities, anxiety disorders, trauma histories, and Autism. Her particular interest is to serve these students by combining behavioral interventions with a comprehensive knowledge of best practices for those with complex mental health profiles and learning needs.



SPECIAL GUEST

**Russell Johnston  
Ph.D.**

## **From the Lens of Acting Commissioner of Education, Russell Johnston**

### **The Vision for Special Education During a Time of Leadership Transition**

Dr. Russell Johnston has been named the Acting Commissioner at the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. He previously served as the deputy commissioner, where he managed the state's accountability and assistance system to help schools and districts raise student achievement. He also oversaw the implementation of various initiatives to assess effectiveness, monitor improvement, and identify interventions.



SPEAKER

**Maria Mossaides**

## **From the Lens of the Office of the Child Avocate**

### **Strategies for Schools in Addressing the Safety and Wellbeing of MA Students and Families as it relates to Special Education**

Ms. Mossaides is the Director of Child Advocate for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, leading an independent state agency since 2015 that provides ombuds services and oversight over statewide children's services.

SPEAKER

**The Honorable  
Sal DiDomenico  
MA State Senator**



### **From the Lens of the MA State Legislature**

#### **Legislative Approaches to the Social and Emotional Well-being Massachusetts Students with Disabilities**

Senator DiDomenico currently serves as Assistant Majority Leader of the Massachusetts Senate, Chair of the Senate Committee on Bills in the Third Reading and Vice Chair of the Joint Committee on Education.

SPEAKER

**Paige Tobin, Esq.  
Murphy, Lamere and  
Murphy, PC**



### **From the Legal Lens**

#### **Statewide Trends in Special Education Law**

Paige Tobin is a principal shareholder and attorney at MLM. She has extensive experience in school law, including school policy, general and special education, student discipline, and student services.